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RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION AND TRAFFIC MOVEMENT IN CHINA

[Summary: The work of re-constructing and improving the Pao-chi--T'ien-shui section of the Lung-Hai Railway has been completed. In the year preceding 1 October 1953, this line carried more than 2 million tons of cargo between T'ien-shui and Lan-chou, with a marked influence on prices. Freight traffic through Cheng-chou is up about 70 percent over 1952, particularly in respect to tank cars carrying petroleum products originating in Yu-men, Kansu.

Modern air-conditioned passenger cars have been finished at the railway shops at Dairen; similar cars are being built at Shanghai, Tsingtao, T'ang-shan, and Chu-chou. A logging railway extension has been built in Kirin Province southeast of Tun-hua.]

PAO-CHI -- T'IENT-SHUI LINE REBUILT -- Hong Kong, Ta Kung Pao, 24 Nov 53

T'ien-shui -- The rebuilding of the Pao-chi--T'ien-shui section of the Lung-Hai Railway which has been in progress for months is now finished. Many sharp curves have been eliminated, the side slopes of cuttings have been made less steep, grades have been improved, and old ties and old rails have been replaced by new ones. A locomotive is now able to haul 12 passenger cars instead of 6 and to travel at a speed of 55 kilometers an hour instead of 7 or 8. The reconstruction of this weak link in this important railway was necessary because of the demands made on it for the transport of equipment and supplies used in the construction of the Lan-chou--Sinkiang railway.

TRAFFIC ON T'IENT-SHUI--LAN-CHOU RAILWAY -- Hong Kong, Ta Kung Pao, 24 Nov 53

Lan-chou -- In the year of operation since 1 October 1952, this railway line has transported more than 2 million tons of freight. It has transported railway ties and rails for the Lan-chou--Sinkiang line, road building machinery for the Tsinghai--Tibet highway, and pipes, pipe casings, and drilling machinery for the Yu-men oil wells. Within the year, over 700,000 tons of cargo have been moved in by rail from Sian to Lan-chou, compared with a few tens of thousands of tons moved in by highway. From the Lung-hsi station alone, 1,000 tons of potatoes were shipped to Tientsin, Shanghai, and Kwangtung.

Prices for various kinds of native products received by the producers have risen substantially, due to the increased demands of markets made accessible by the railway. For instance, capsicum, a seasoning produced at or near Kan-ku, yields the farmers 22 1/2 percent more than before the railway was built. Farm implement from industrial cities in the east are being supplied to the farmers of the interior at prices often less than one-third their former cost.

GROWING FREIGHT TRAFFIC THROUGH CHENG-CHOU -- Hong Kong, Wen-hui Pao, 20 Oct 53

Cheng-chou (Hsin-hua She) -- At Cheng-chou, the important junction of the Peiping--Hankow Railway and the Lung-Hai Railway lines, the number of freight cars passing through this station averaged 1,000 per day between January and August 1953, which is 70 percent greater than the average daily figure for highest previous year. Hitherto, 12-wheel freight cars were rarely seen, but now they are becoming more common.

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The cargo being transported consists chiefly of materials for industrial construction, such as bricks, tiles, sand, and stone from various places in Honan Province; timber from the hills of southern China for use in the mines of North China; structural steel and machinery from the Northeast bound for the Northwest; and petroleum products from Yu-men in Kansu being shipped to the cities of south China.

Since the completion of the T'ien-shui--Lan-chow Railway line, petroleum products from Yu-men have arrived in lots of several tens of tank cars at a time, instead of by tins and small drums. In the freight yards, mountains of bolts of cloth, paper, sugar, fresh fruits, agricultural implements, modern fumigating and insecticide apparatus, and much miscellaneous goods are constantly being transhipped. In August 1953, the tonnage of LCL goods handled at Cheng-chow was 31 percent greater than in the same month of 1952.

CONSTRUCTION OF PASSENGER COACHES -- Hong Kong, Wen-hui Pao, 20 Oct 53

Shanghai -- The construction of the first lot of improved passenger coaches at the Dairen Locomotive and Car Works is finished and the new coaches will soon be running on the Peiping--Harbin, Peiping--Shanghai, and South China railway lines.

Although these cars have hard seats, great attention has been paid to the comfort and convenience of passengers. The cars are fully air-conditioned for both hot and cold weather; they have electric lights, running water, improved toilet rooms, a radio broadcasting room, and a room for train service personnel. A feature most appreciated by passengers is the amount of the space allowed for each person; this space is now 0.52 square meters, compared with 0.351 square meters on the old cars. The new cars are 2 meters longer than the old cars, but have seats for 14 fewer passengers. The space between seats in the old cars was 43 centimeters, while in the new cars it is 53 centimeters, and a small tea table may be placed between the seats.

Similar coaches are also being built in the railway shops at Shanghai, Chuchou, Tsingtao, and T'ang-shan.

LOGGING LINE COMPLETED IN KIRIN PROVINCE -- Hong Kong, Ta Kung Pao, 24 Nov 53

Kirin (Hsin-hua She) -- The construction of a 140-km long logging railroad, begun in May 1953, was completed on or about 21 September 1953. The railway line is in the southeastern part of Tun-hua Hsien, in the area of Ha-erh-pa-ling, and it extends through a primeval forest and across two rivers in the direction of Chang-pai Shan.

At the beginning this vast forest area was given the name "mi-kuei-chen" (wicker fish trap), because the terrain is so broken and confusing that it is difficult to know directions. The elevation of the area averages about 1,100 meters above sea level. The forests contain ten or so kinds of trees, including red pine, yellow pine, cryptomeria, walnut, mallotus japonicus, catalpa, and willow. This lumber is suitable for railway ties, bridge timbers, building construction, mine props, and furniture. Some of the wood is valuable for fine carvings.

The grading for this rail line involved the excavation or filling of 500,000 carloads of earth and rock. Ten bridges were constructed, including one high one, innumerable culverts, open drains at 208 places, and 57 kilometers of telephone circuits. To expedite matters, earth was moved by aerial transport in certain places, thereby halving the time required as compared with surface transportation.

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For part of the time, day and night shifts were employed, with gas illumination for night work. Motor vehicles were used to transport railway ties, rails, and food supplies. Several thousand loggers were engaged in preparing sites for sawmills and of installing the sawmill equipment.

ELECTRIC SHOVELS SENT TO HUANG-P'U -- Peiping, Jen-min Jih-pao, 29 Aug 53

[Letter to the Editor] -- A staff member of the Canton Railway Subbureau writes of an amusing incident that began on 29 June 1953 and continued during the ensuing weeks. Company No 652, of Ch'ang-ch'un, Kirin Province, dispatched on four 40-ton flatcars some large electric shovels consigned to the Hua-nan Land Development Company at Huang-p'u, Kwangtung. Upon arrival at destination, only one of the four cars was unloaded; the other three cars, with their cargo, upon request of the original shipper, were sent back to Meng-chia-t'un [125 14, 43 50] near Ch'ang-ch'un. On 11 July, the same three cars, carrying the identical cargo dispatched from Meng-chia-t'un arrived again at Huang-p'u. One of these cars was unloaded; the other two cars, upon orders from the northern consignor, were sent back with their cargo, seal unbroken, to Meng-chia-t'un.

The kilometrage per loaded car for one journey was over 1,100 kilometers. In the handling of this shipment, the futile transportation amounted to more than 8,000 car-kilometers. Furthermore, due to the large size and weight of the shovels, these cars required special handling. When going around curves of less than 300 meters radius of curvature, across bridges, or when entering and leaving stations, the train was ordered to reduce speed to not over 10 kilometers per hour. When the cost in transportation, time, wear and tear, and earning power of the shovels while out of use is taken into account, the waste and loss was considerable. The cause should be investigated and suitable punishment meted out to the responsible parties.

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